



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

REMARKS BY THE HON. MINISTER OF STATE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.
HON DR. JOHN CHRYSSTOM MIYINGO

AT THE RELEASE OF THE APPROVED SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS' LOAN
SCHEME BENEFICIARIES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

6TH DECEMBER 2022

- **THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' FINANCING BOARD**
 - **MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**
 - **THE PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS**
 - **STAFF FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS**
 - **STAFF FROM THE BOARD**
 - **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS**
 - **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**
-

On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Sports, I would like to welcome you all and thank you most sincerely for joining us as we release the long anticipated list of Student Loan Beneficiaries for the Academic Year 2022/23.

I would like to congratulate the Higher Education Students' Financing Board who have worked tirelessly to conclude this process which began in July 2022.

This year's release brings on board the 9th Cohort of Loan Scheme Beneficiaries since the Scheme was inaugurated by His Excellency, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni in 2014. You may recall that the Students' Loan Scheme was born out of the 2011 Presidential Manifesto following the success of our initial universal education initiatives which brought thousands of learners to the education cycle.

With the Government Sponsorship Scheme only able to support 10,000 learners on both Diploma and Degree programs, the Loan Scheme was introduced to enable our most needy students to access funding under a loan arrangement and create a sustainable funding model.

I am happy to note that the 625 Beneficiaries being added to the Scheme today increases the number to 13,405 loan beneficiaries. There is a very high chance that many of these students would have missed out on higher education if it were not for this strategic government intervention.

I would therefore like us to applaud the NRM Government for continuing to innovate and introduce programs that uplift our people and position them to compete and succeed.

We recognize that there is need for more funding to capitalize the Higher Education Students' Financing Board. The demand for student loans has certainly surpassed the available resources. While initially, applicants averaged at 2000, the demand is now ranging at close to 10,000 applicants. This is a sign that the lower education interventions are working tremendously well.

My Ministry will seek audience with our counterparts at the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and colleagues in Parliament to lobby for increased funding for the Board.

It is also important to note that since the Board started operations, apart from the increasing number of qualified candidates, the number of Chartered Higher Education Institutions have increased, the number of accredited programs have also increased and this trajectory challenges the board to support even more students who now have improved access to further education.

I am aware that Covid-19 and the resulting economic slowdown had an adverse effect on many of our learners and the requests for support have now extended to welfare and ICT equipment to support the hybrid delivery of lectures. We are alive to these emerging issues and our plans will need to take into account these changing demands.

Despite the many challenges, the Board is registering up to 40% of former beneficiaries paying back their monthly loan installments including those who are clearing their loans before the end of the grace period. While the Scheme

provides for rescheduling of the Loan repayments in cases of no income, I call upon all our beneficiaries to make every effort and deposit their monthly installments so that those coming after them can also receive similar support.

I must acknowledge that there was a delay in the release of the Loan Scheme list for this Cohort as we concluded the process of installing the new Governance Board. In all this, I want to thank institutions which continued to provide services to students as this process was ongoing. You remain among our most treasured partners in this drive to increase access to higher education.

I would also like to commend the Secretariat for the great job done in extending awareness about the Students' Loan Scheme and automating the processes for loan applications. This has facilitated country wide knowledge of the Scheme and is encouraging the study of Sciences in our secondary schools.

I pay tribute to the outgoing and pioneer Governance Board who served diligently for the last 8 years. It is against their hard work, that the present board will develop the agenda for future growth.

In a special way, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the late Prof. Christine Dranzoa, the former Vice Chancellor at Muni University who served on the Board for all the 8 years only to pass away after handing over. I extend my condolences to the family and to Muni University.

The Ministry would like to encourage more female students to apply for support under the Scheme. Despite the low number of applicants from this gender, the affirmative action which offers female applicants 7-extra points ensured that 33% of the Beneficiaries are female. We need to work towards having an equal number of ladies and gentlemen benefiting from the scheme.

I am glad to see the Northern Region leading with 30% of the total awards while 23 Persons with Disabilities have received support this year. These are all beneficiaries of a special affirmative action which I would like the board to continue with.

I congratulate all those who have been selected for study loans in this academic year. I call upon them to work hard in their studies, remain disciplined and focused. All successful candidates should remember that in the competitive world

where we live today, it not enough to pass. You must excel in whatever you do in order to access opportunities that will ease repayment of the loans that government is awarding.

Lastly, allow me, once again, to thank and applaud the Members of the Higher Education Students' Financing Board and Staff at the Secretariat for the tireless effort and good work done. I want to equally thank all the stakeholders including Members of Parliament, Ministry of Education Staff, Ministry of Finance and Universities among others, for the continued support to the Board.

I want to also recognize the good work that is being done by the press to promote government programs especially in the Education Sector. Without your timely and relentless reporting, many people would miss out on the opportunities presented by important government programs like the loan scheme. Please keep up the good work.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now my honor to release the list of the 9th cohort of successful loan beneficiaries for the Academic Year 2022/2023 under the Students' Loan Scheme.

Thank you for listening to me.

For God and My Country